

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (CANCELED).

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An isolated or a purified protein involved in the virulence of a *Leishmania* parasite, wherein the protein has SEQ ID NO:2 comprising at least one site (Cys-Gly-His-Cys) identical to a potential active site of a protein from a protein disulfide isomerase family (PDI), wherein said protein is predominantly expressed in the most virulent isolates of the parasite.

3-15. (CANCELED).

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An immunogenic composition comprising a the protein according to claim 2 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier therefor, wherein said protein is a polypeptide of at least 10 amino acids and wherein said immunogenic composition is capable of *in vitro* stimulation of the proliferation of mononuclear cells originating from individuals who have come into contact with a *Leishmania* parasite.

17-53. (CANCELED).